

**Statement on Signing the Executive Order on Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments**

*November 6, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign a revised Executive order on consultation with Indian tribal governments. This Executive order, itself based on consultation, will renew my administration's commitment to tribal sovereignty and our government-to-government relationship.

The first Americans hold a unique place in our history. Long before others came to our shores, the first Americans had established self-governing societies. Among their societies, democracy flourished long before the founding of our Nation. Our Nation entered into treaties with Indian nations, which acknowledged their right to self-government and protected their lands. The Constitution affirms the United States' government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes both in the Commerce Clause, which establishes that "the Congress shall have the Power To . . . regulate commerce . . . with the Indian Tribes," and in the Supremacy Clause, which ratifies the Indian treaties that the United States entered into prior to 1787.

Indian nations and tribes ceded lands, water, and mineral rights in exchange for peace, security, health care, and education. The Federal Government did not always live up to its end of the bargain. That was wrong, and I have worked hard to change that by recognizing the importance of tribal sovereignty and government-to-government relations. When I became the first President since James Monroe to invite the leaders of every tribe to the White House in April 1994, I vowed to honor and respect tribal sovereignty. At that historic meeting, I issued a memorandum directing all Federal agencies to consult with Indian tribes before making decisions on matters affecting American Indian and Alaska Native peoples.

Today, there is nothing more important in Federal-tribal relations than fostering true government-to-government relations to empower American Indians and Alaska Natives to improve their own lives, the lives of their children, and the generations to come. We

must continue to engage in a partnership, so that the first Americans can reach their full potential. So, in our Nation's relations with Indian tribes, our first principle must be to respect the right of American Indians and Alaska Natives to self-determination. We must respect Native Americans' rights to choose for themselves their own way of life on their own lands according to their time honored cultures and traditions. We must also acknowledge that American Indians and Alaska Natives must have access to new technology and commerce to promote economic opportunity in their homelands.

Today, I reaffirm our commitment to tribal sovereignty, self-determination, and self-government by issuing this revised Executive order on consultation and coordination with Indian tribal governments. This Executive order builds on prior actions and strengthens our government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes. It will ensure that all Executive departments and agencies consult with Indian tribes and respect tribal sovereignty as they develop policy on issues that impact Indian communities.

**Executive Order 13175—  
Consultation and Coordination  
With Indian Tribal Governments**

*November 6, 2000*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with tribal officials in the development of Federal policies that have tribal implications, to strengthen the United States government-to-government relationships with Indian tribes, and to reduce the imposition of unfunded mandates upon Indian tribes; it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Definitions.** For purposes of this order:

(a) "Policies that have tribal implications" refers to regulations, legislative comments or proposed legislation, and other policy statements or actions that have substantial direct effects on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution

of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes.

(b) "Indian tribe" means an Indian or Alaska Native tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, or community that the Secretary of the Interior acknowledges to exist as an Indian tribe pursuant to the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of 1994, 25 U.S.C. 479a.

(c) "Agency" means any authority of the United States that is an "agency" under 44 U.S.C. 3502(1), other than those considered to be independent regulatory agencies, as defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(5).

(d) "Tribal officials" means elected or duly appointed officials of Indian tribal governments or authorized intertribal organizations.

**Sec. 2. Fundamental Principles.** In formulating or implementing policies that have tribal implications, agencies shall be guided by the following fundamental principles:

(a) The United States has a unique legal relationship with Indian tribal governments as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, treaties, statutes, Executive Orders, and court decisions. Since the formation of the Union, the United States has recognized Indian tribes as domestic dependent nations under its protection. The Federal Government has enacted numerous statutes and promulgated numerous regulations that establish and define a trust relationship with Indian tribes.

(b) Our Nation, under the law of the United States, in accordance with treaties, statutes, Executive Orders, and judicial decisions, has recognized the right of Indian tribes to self-government. As domestic dependent nations, Indian tribes exercise inherent sovereign powers over their members and territory. The United States continues to work with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis to address issues concerning Indian tribal self-government, tribal trust resources, and Indian tribal treaty and other rights.

(c) The United States recognizes the right of Indian tribes to self-government and supports tribal sovereignty and self-determination.

**Sec. 3. Policymaking Criteria.** In addition to adhering to the fundamental principles set forth in section 2, agencies shall adhere, to the extent permitted by law, to the following

criteria when formulating and implementing policies that have tribal implications:

(a) Agencies shall respect Indian tribal self-government and sovereignty, honor tribal treaty and other rights, and strive to meet the responsibilities that arise from the unique legal relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribal governments.

(b) With respect to Federal statutes and regulations administered by Indian tribal governments, the Federal Government shall grant Indian tribal governments the maximum administrative discretion possible.

(c) When undertaking to formulate and implement policies that have tribal implications, agencies shall:

- (1) encourage Indian tribes to develop their own policies to achieve program objectives;
- (2) where possible, defer to Indian tribes to establish standards; and
- (3) in determining whether to establish Federal standards, consult with tribal officials as to the need for Federal standards and any alternatives that would limit the scope of Federal standards or otherwise preserve the prerogatives and authority of Indian tribes.

**Sec. 4. Special Requirements for Legislative Proposals.** Agencies shall not submit to the Congress legislation that would be inconsistent with the policymaking criteria in Section 3.

**Sec. 5. Consultation.** (a) Each agency shall have an accountable process to ensure meaningful and timely input by tribal officials in the development of regulatory policies that have tribal implications. Within 30 days after the effective date of this order, the head of each agency shall designate an official with principal responsibility for the agency's implementation of this order. Within 60 days of the effective date of this order, the designated official shall submit to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) a description of the agency's consultation process.

(b) To the extent practicable and permitted by law, no agency shall promulgate any regulation that has tribal implications, that imposes substantial direct compliance costs on Indian tribal governments, and that is not required by statute, unless:

- (1) funds necessary to pay the direct costs incurred by the Indian tribal government or the tribe in complying with the regulation are provided by the Federal Government; or
  - (2) the agency, prior to the formal promulgation of the regulation,
  - (A) consulted with tribal officials early in the process of developing the proposed regulation;
  - (B) in a separately identified portion of the preamble to the regulation as it is to be issued in the *Federal Register*, provides to the Director of OMB a tribal summary impact statement, which consists of a description of the extent of the agency's prior consultation with tribal officials, a summary of the nature of their concerns and the agency's position supporting the need to issue the regulation, and a statement of the extent to which the concerns of tribal officials have been met; and
  - (C) makes available to the Director of OMB any written communications submitted to the agency by tribal officials.
- (c) To the extent practicable and permitted by law, no agency shall promulgate any regulation that has tribal implications and that preempts tribal law unless the agency, prior to the formal promulgation of the regulation,
- (1) consulted with tribal officials early in the process of developing the proposed regulation;
  - (2) in a separately identified portion of the preamble to the regulation as it is to be issued in the *Federal Register*, provides to the Director of OMB a tribal summary impact statement, which consists of a description of the extent of the agency's prior consultation with tribal officials, a summary of the nature of their concerns and the agency's position supporting the need to issue the regulation, and a statement of the extent to which the concerns of tribal officials have been met; and
  - (3) makes available to the Director of OMB any written communications submitted to the agency by tribal officials.
- (d) On issues relating to tribal self-government, tribal trust resources, or Indian tribal treaty and other rights, each agency should explore and, where appropriate, use consensual mechanisms for developing regulations, including negotiated rulemaking.
- Sec. 6. Increasing Flexibility for Indian Tribal Waivers.**
- (a) Agencies shall review the processes under which Indian tribes apply for waivers of statutory and regulatory requirements and take appropriate steps to streamline those processes.
- (b) Each agency shall, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, consider any application by an Indian tribe for a waiver of statutory or regulatory requirements in connection with any program administered by the agency with a general view toward increasing opportunities for utilizing flexible policy approaches at the Indian tribal level in cases in which the proposed waiver is consistent with the applicable Federal policy objectives and is otherwise appropriate.
- (c) Each agency shall, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, render a decision upon a complete application for a waiver within 120 days of receipt of such application by the agency, or as otherwise provided by law or regulation. If the application for waiver is not granted, the agency shall provide the applicant with timely written notice of the decision and the reasons therefor.
- (d) This section applies only to statutory or regulatory requirements that are discretionary and subject to waiver by the agency.
- Sec. 7. Accountability.**
- (a) In transmitting any draft final regulation that has tribal implications to OMB pursuant to Executive Order 12866 of September 30, 1993, each agency shall include a certification from the official designated to ensure compliance with this order stating that the requirements of this order have been met in a meaningful and timely manner.
- (b) In transmitting proposed legislation that has tribal implications to OMB, each agency shall include a certification from the official designated to ensure compliance with this order that all relevant requirements of this order have been met.

(c) Within 180 days after the effective date of this order the Director of OMB and the Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs shall confer with tribal officials to ensure that this order is being properly and effectively implemented.

**Sec. 8. Independent Agencies.** Independent regulatory agencies are encouraged to comply with the provisions of this order.

**Sec. 9. General Provisions.** (a) This order shall supplement but not supersede the requirements contained in Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review), Executive Order 12988 (Civil Justice Reform), OMB Circular A-19, and the Executive Memorandum of April 29, 1994, on Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments.

(b) This order shall complement the consultation and waiver provisions in sections 6 and 7 of Executive Order 13132 (Federalism).

(c) Executive Order 13084 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments) is revoked at the time this order takes effect.

(d) This order shall be effective 60 days after the date of this order.

**Sec. 10. Judicial Review.** This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch, and is not intended to create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, or any person.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
November 6, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register,  
8:45 a.m., November 8, 2000]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on November 9.